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MONTHLY REVIEW

AN INDEPENDENT SOCIALIST MAGAZINE

THE MEANING OF MACARTHUR

THE EDITORS

IMPERIALISM AND PEACE

D. D. KOSAMBI

THE CRISIS IN THE LABOR PARTY

KONNI ZILLIACUS

THE AMERICAN RULING CLASS

PAUL M. SWEETZ

VOL. 3

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EDITORS . . . LEO HUBERMAN . . . PAUL M. SWEETZ

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NOTES FROM THE EDITORS

In last month's issue we asked readers to cooperate in a sub drive. We enclosed specially designed leaflets, one part of which was a gummed label on which a friend's address could be written, and another part of which provided space for a message urging the friend to subscribe. We asked that these be filled out and returned to the office for use in sending out free sample copies. The response has been excellent. Here are excerpts from the messages received in one morning's mail:

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Personal messages like these from actual readers get results such as no other form of promotion can match. Our only complaint is that more readers haven't yet joined in this sub drive. Those of you who haven't done so, please hurry up and fill out the leaflets we sent you last month. If you can

(continued on inside back cover)

THE MEANING OF MAC ARTHUR

There are, it would seem, two possible explanations of MacArthur's behavior. He might have believed that he could get away with a policy of persistent insubordination until either the drift of the Korean war itself or a change in the political situation at home should make it possible for him to carry out his plans to attack China. Or he might have been deliberately courting dismissal with a view to coming home as a hero and a martyr with a mission to lead the American people in a policy of Far Eastern, and ultimately no doubt world, conquest. A third possibility is that he didn't much care which of these two outcomes his insubordination would lead to: for him it perhaps appeared to be a case of "heads I win, tails you lose."

It would be interesting to know what MacArthur's real calculations were, but it is not a question of great importance in and of itself. Much more important is the question of the identity, strength, degree of organization, and so on, of his aides and accomplices inside the United States. We have read and heard speculations on this subject, but nothing of a solidly factual nature seems as yet to have come to light. Until it does, there is little point in adding to the already over-inflated volume of conjecture and theorizing. The facts that we do know are sufficiently worthy of attention and analysis.

Let us not deceive ourselves: those facts are ominous and pregnant with evil. The whole MacArthur affair throws a vivid light on the present state of the nation, and it gives strong indications of the direction in which we are headed.

The huge public demonstrations which attended MacArthur's home-coming, the undoubted impact of his cunningly demagogic speech before Congress, the fawning attitude of senators from both political parties when he appeared before the Senate Foreign Relations and Armed Services Committees—these are all symptoms of a deep national malaise. Large sections of the population are worried, confused, frustrated. Even more important, they feel caught in the grip of forces over which they have no control and which are hurrying them on to some terrible fate. As individuals they are helpless; they have no organizations through which they can act collectively;

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the puny politicians who pretend to lead them are obviously as blind and impotent as they are. These are the circumstances which favor the appearance of a man on horseback, a hero who believes in himself and has the power to make others believe in him, who appears to offer the sense of direction, the certainty, and the leadership that are so sorely missed. Whether or not MacArthur has ambitions to play this role to the end, there can be no doubt that he has started to play it; and there can be just as little doubt that the response to date indicates an alarming degree of public receptivity. Probably for the first time in the history of the United States, Caesarism is a real danger.

The danger is by no means confined to MacArthur. It is quite possible, indeed probable, that he will not be able personally to capitalize on the existing public mood. His close association with the most reactionary wing of the Republican Party—men like Herbert Hoover, Joe Martin, Styles Bridges, and their ilk—will very likely keep MacArthur from ever attaining the stature of a genuinely national figure, and for this reason the chances are poor that he will be able to attract the kind of broad ruling-class backing that a successful Caesar must have. But the extent of MacArthur's progress, despite grave handicaps, will certainly stimulate the ambitions of others either to become Caesar or to play the part of Caesar's promoter and manager. The most eligible candidate, of course, is Eisenhower who has been astute enough to avoid party politics, has kept discreetly in the background while MacArthur has had his hour on the stage, and is already being diligently promoted by a variety of ambitious men. It is within the realm of possibility that Eisenhower will be the residuary legatee and main beneficiary of the whole MacArthur affair.

We must beware, however, of allowing our attention to become too much centered on personalities. It may well be that the sudden upsurge of Caesarism will prove abortive. Even so, the MacArthur affair brings into sharp relief a fundamental trend in American life which has the most serious implications for the future. This is the growing dominance of the military over all decisive questions of high policy. Ironically, MacArthur's dismissal was *in form* an assertion of the supremacy of civilian authority over the military. But the whole train of events which it set in motion has shown that *in fact* the military has never been so powerful as it is today. It is not only that MacArthur himself has become the outspoken leader of an all-out war party; no less striking is the fact that those who disagree with MacArthur (how seriously we shall discuss presently) rely almost wholly on generals to make their case for them. Bradley was put up to make a political speech answering MacArthur before the latter's

return; Marshall led off in rebuttal of MacArthur's views before the Senate committees; every one on both sides has been assiduously building up the Joint Chiefs of Staff as an almost oracular authority on all questions of policy; more and more people are turning hopefully to Eisenhower as the ultimate saviour.

This growth in the importance and authority of the military is, of course, deeply rooted in the present situation as a whole. Military spending completely dominates the economy; foreign policy, instead of controlling military policy, is increasingly becoming a mere accessory; the military establishment is growing by leaps and bounds, and it has already become virtually the sole judge of its own requirements. We have reached a situation in which Secretary of Defense Marshall could, without the slightest fear of contradiction, tell the Senate Foreign Relations and Armed Services Committees: "I say the Army is the primary consideration of this government." (*New York Times*, May 9.) Under these circumstances, the generals are bound to acquire more and more authority. The late Professor Joseph A. Schumpeter, an observant conservative social scientist with long experience of central European conditions, once remarked that it is possible to tell a militarist nation by "whether leading generals as such wield political influence and whether the responsible statesmen can act only with their consent." How appallingly far the United States has already travelled along the road to militarism, measured by this standard, will be apparent to any one who reads the record of the MacArthur hearings.

It is important to understand the implications of this trend toward full-scale militarism. We are getting the answer to the long-debated question: what is the specifically American form of fascism? Clearly, the kind of pseudo-radical mass movement which brought fascism to Italy and Germany has never struck roots in this country and there are no indications that anything of the kind is likely to develop in the visible future. The reason is not far to seek. Pseudo-radicalism is an answer to real radicalism; and where, as in this country, the radical movement is weak, pseudo-radicalism has no popular appeal and hence no reason for existence. But military rule is a very different thing, even though the ultimate consequences may be much the same. Generals have or can be invested with the necessary political sex appeal, and in a militarized economy their function necessarily grows in importance. These two facts together—and they are *both* essential—can lead, by a process the nature of which is now unfolding before our eyes, to the domination of the machinery of government *and* of both political parties by the higher officer corps. If and when this domination is thoroughly consolidated, the United States will be to all intents and purposes a fascist nation. It should be

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noted, in this connection, that the development of militarism *may* go hand in hand with the development of personal Caesarism, but the two are not necessarily tied together.

Thus, if we are looking for a foreign analogy to this specifically American form of fascism, we will find it rather in pre-World War II militarist Japan, with its Zaibatsu-controlled economy and its puppet political parties, than in Fascist Italy or Nazi Germany. But we must beware of pushing even this analogy too far. Japan had (the extent to which it still has does not concern us at the moment) an officer corps drawn from a clearly distinguishable social stratum with its own standards and traditions. It also had a *relatively* independent bureaucracy. The Japanese ruling class was therefore compartmentalized into military, bureaucratic, and capitalist sectors. Their common meeting ground, of course, was agreement on a policy of unlimited imperialist expansion; but within the limits set by this policy, they quarrelled and compromised, maneuvered and jockeyed for position. It was these interrelations among what were thus more or less separate sectors of the ruling class which determined the content of Japanese political life.

The American situation is very different, just as our history is very different from Japanese history. We have no hereditary officer corps. Our bureaucracy has no corporate existence. The ruling class is thoroughly capitalist and has traditionally exercised its rule indirectly, from behind the scenes—through control over the media of communication and education, through manipulating (with pecuniary levers) the political parties. The form of American politics has been that of pure bourgeois democracy and the content has been the compromising of class and group differences within limits prescribed by the necessity to preserve and foster the development of the capitalist system itself. Against this background, militarization means not the development of, and acquisition of power by, an hereditary officer corps but rather a change in the methods by which the ruling class exercises power. The process can perhaps best be described as the self-militarization of the ruling class—not all of it, of course, but those elements which perform the decisive functions of government. In actual practice, this process of self-militarization can be seen in the increasing interchangeability of directing personnel in industry on the one hand, and in the Army, Navy, and Air Force on the other. General MacArthur and his man Friday, General Whitney, make convenient symbols: it is reported (whether with literal accuracy makes no difference) that MacArthur has accepted a \$100,000-a-year job with Remington Rand, while there is no doubt that Whitney achieved high military rank *via* the practice of corporation law. This two-way traffic between business and the military began

as a more or less exceptional wartime phenomenon. It has now become quite normal.

To sum up. The capitalist economy has become essentially a war economy. This thrusts the military upward and forward in our national life and sets in motion a process of interpenetration of military and Big Business circles—what we have called the self-militarization of the ruling class. This comes at a time when the generals have the glamor and prestige and potential popularity that the tycoons and politicians almost wholly lack. All these forces converge in the militarization of society, the emasculation of bourgeois democracy, the gradual unfolding of the specifically American form of fascism. The MacArthur affair not only accelerates the tempo of this disastrous trend; it also shows how far along the road we have already travelled.

Let us now turn to the other face of the MacArthur affair—its bearing on United States foreign policy, its implications for war and peace.

MacArthur's policy is to plunge the United States into an all-out war on China. It is not put quite this way, of course. He says he would have the United States use only naval and air forces for bombing military targets and communications and blockading the coast; all ground forces (except for a few hundred instructors) would be supplied by Chiang Kai-shek. A limited program of this sort, according to MacArthur's repeated assertions, would soon bring about a military collapse of China and force her to sue for peace on American terms.

One does not have to be a military expert, one has only to know a little history, to understand that MacArthur is, intentionally or otherwise, talking nonsense.

For approximately ten years, Japan tried to conquer China. Japan had complete control of the sea and air and she had a powerful army of several million men. China was politically divided between Kuomintang and Communists and virtually cut off from effective outside help. Still Japan never managed to finish the job, and in large parts of China Japanese authority could be exercised only where and so long as Japanese soldiers were actually present. What is the situation now? China is unified under a revolutionary regime which is releasing and organizing the enormous latent power of the 500 million Chinese people. China is allied with the Soviet Union, and the two countries have a frontier thousands of miles long which no blockade can reach and over which increasing quantities of aid can be transported. The idea that China *now* can be defeated by a war limited to bombing and naval blockade while China *ten years ago* could not be defeated by an all-out war waged

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by all arms, including a massive land army—this idea is so fantastic that MacArthur must blush every time he puts it forward in the guise of a considered military judgment.

No, this cannot be what MacArthur really has in mind. What he really thinks must be that the "mission" of the United States is to succeed where Japan failed, to build an empire that includes not only Japan but China and no doubt ultimately all of Asia. As Walter Lippmann expressed it in his column of May 8th:

The incalculable risks—incalculable by his own admission—which General MacArthur wishes to accept by making war on China are simply incomprehensible if nothing more is at stake than to bring about a cease-fire in Korea and the withdrawal from Korea of the Chinese—and presumably also the American—armies. The risks that General MacArthur wishes to take become comprehensible only in the context of the General's vision—his vision of the Pacific Ocean as an American lake, and of Japan as lying within the sphere of American power, and of China, with Chiang restored, as brought within the American sphere of influence.

This is all clear enough—though some might be inclined to call MacArthur's "vision" by a less poetic name—and there is really very little excuse for misunderstanding the nature of the course which MacArthur is recommending to us. He wants a war of conquest against China, and he cannot hide the unavoidable corollary that such a war would require the total commitment of America's military resources.

Now what does the Truman administration want?

On the face of it Truman and his advisers are simply proposing a continuation of the present limited war in Korea with the gruesome objective of inflicting the maximum possible casualties on the North Koreans and Chinese. Marshall explained the purpose of American policy in Korea as follows:

That method was to inflict the greatest number of casualties we could in order to break down not only the morale, but the trained fabric of the Chinese armies. [Five lines deleted by the censor at this point.]

That is, inflict terrific casualties on the Chinese Communist forces. If we break the morale of their armies, but more particularly, if we destroy their best trained armies as we have been in the process of doing, there, it seems to me, you develop the best probability of reaching a satisfactory negotiatory basis with those Chinese Communist forces, without getting ourselves into what we think would be a great hazard toward developing a

much enlarged struggle with consequently larger casualties or a complete world war.

As Marshall made clear elsewhere in his testimony, what he here calls "a satisfactory negotiary basis" means acceptance of American terms, in other words, a Chinese surrender.

Once again, one does not have to be a military expert to pass judgment on this kind of talk. One has only to assume that the Chinese authorities have not lost their heads and will refuse to offer up their armies for destruction. It is no good Marshall's citing Wellington's Peninsula Campaign as an example of the success of the strategy he says the United States is following in Korea. The Chinese also know about the Peninsula Campaign and can learn its lessons as well as Americans. Moreover, there is nothing in the evidence presented by Marshall to indicate that the Chinese and North Koreans have been *relatively* more hurt by casualties than the Americans and South Koreans. (It must be remembered that South Korean casualties have outnumbered American by something like 3 to 1.) Finally, it *never* makes sense to base your whole "war plan" on the assumption that your opponent is going not only to make mistakes but to persist in making the same mistakes to the point of defeating himself.

This is not to argue that the administration is in fact basing its whole war plan on that assumption; rather it is to argue that the administration's calculations go far beyond anything that has yet been specifically told to the Senate Committees. The administration, it would seem, is no more anxious than MacArthur to put its case frankly before the public.

Nevertheless, from remarks made by administration spokesmen—especially Senator McMahon and Secretary of Defense Marshall—it is possible to reconstruct the main outlines of administration policy. When we do this we shall see that the differences between MacArthur and the administration are much smaller than at first glance they appear to be.

In the first place, it is important to note that in the early days of the hearings both sides specifically agreed on a number of occasions that United States action in Korea was limited to one of three possible courses. First, the present policy of fighting a limited war of attrition could be continued. Second, MacArthur's policy of expanding the war could be adopted. Or third, the United States could withdraw from Korea. Neither MacArthur nor Marshall nor any of the Senators ever suggested the possibility of seeking a peaceful settlement with the Chinese. We shall consider the terms of such a settlement presently; for the moment it is sufficient to note that the administration's policy is in principle as uncompromising as that of MacArthur.

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The question is now narrowed down to this: if the limited war of attrition has no chance of forcing the Chinese to capitulate and if it is not designed to maintain the *status quo* while a compromise is worked out, what can its purpose be?

This can be approached by asking another question: what are the administration's objections to MacArthur's policy? The answer here is clearly that MacArthur's policy is rejected by the administration only because it might bring in the Soviet Union, under the terms of the Sino-Soviet treaty of alliance. Marshall, responding to questioning by Senator George, was categorical on this point:

... if you can say that we are certain and know beyond a doubt that the Soviet government is not going to intervene, I think we would use our naval power, and we would use our air power very freely. The restrictions, I would say, would be not to use those powers, if avoidable, in a way that claimed a great many innocent victims and left a bitterness that we would be fifty years in overcoming. But I certainly would feel that once the Communist Chinese forces are in Korea in large measure, you would go after the communications, would go after their air installations, and we would do what we could along the coast of China to weaken their hand.

And the point was spelled out for the record by Senator Saltonstall:

Now, I have listened to all of General MacArthur's testimony, all of yours [Marshall's], and it appears to me that the differences between the administration's policy, as stated by you, and General MacArthur's opinion, really boils down to a clash of opinion as to the Soviet's intentions, and the Soviet's capabilities for waging war in the Far East. Do you agree that this is the basis of the difference in between you?

GENERAL MARSHALL—That is the principal basis of the difference of opinion. . . .

The administration, in other words, has no principled objection to extending the war against China. It is only fear of Soviet intervention that keeps it from adopting MacArthur's policy. Moreover, it must be assumed that the administration approves of the logical implications of MacArthur's policy which, as we have seen, are not Chinese military collapse and surrender but the increasing commitment of American strength to an all-out war.

We now have the key to administration policy. Limited war cannot force China to capitulate, and it remains limited only because of fear of the Soviet Union. But fear of the Soviet Union is not absolute; it is not fear of a global war as such—it is fear of being defeated by the Soviet Union. Administration policy therefore is to use the period of limited war to build up military strength to such

a point that the Soviet Union need no longer be feared, in other words, to the point where, in the judgment of the United States military authorities, the Soviet Union can be defeated in a global war. When this relation of forces has been achieved, the wraps can be taken off in Korea and the war can be carried to China, à la MacArthur; or the Soviet Union, as the main enemy, can be directly challenged. In either case, the objective could only be to force the two leading socialist countries to submit to American terms—and that would mean establishing *de facto* American hegemony over the whole world.

Administration spokesmen, of course, do not formulate their policy in these terms. It is even possible that they do not fully understand the implications of their present course. But it is easy to show that their thinking runs along the lines indicated. For example, Truman, in his message to MacArthur of January 13th, stated:

Further, *pending the build-up of our national strength*, we must act with great prudence insofar as extending the area of hostilities is concerned. Steps which might in themselves be justified, and which might lend some assistance to the campaign in Korea, would not be beneficial if they thereby involved Japan or western Europe in large-scale hostilities. (Italics added.)

Senator McMahon, interrogating MacArthur:

And now, General, before it is too late I want to examine the risks of the course which you wish to pursue, because if the risks are so great as to prejudice the existence of this nation, then it is time we stopped and weighed those risks, *until we get into a position to rebut them and to meet them*. (Italics added.)

Again, Senator McMahon:

What I am trying to say is that now is the time, it would seem to me, to stop, look, and listen and see where we are before we plunge into a course that may take us over the precipice *before we are ready*. (Italics added.)

Exchange between Senator Johnson (Texas) and Marshall:

JOHNSON—General Marshall, when General MacArthur was here, he testified to his belief that we should and we were able to fight communism on two or more fronts, if that became necessary. . . . He regarded it . . . as defeatist attitude to take another position. Would you care to comment on this particular point of view, and our ability to meet the challenges of the global problems as they may be presented?

MARSHALL—I think the consideration of the statement has to be very specifically qualified with the understanding that we are not in a position now to take measures which, we will say,

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were characterized by MacArthur the opposite of defeatist measures.

We are gathering our strength as rapidly as we can, and we certainly do not want to become involved in a world struggle at any time, *and certainly not prior to the time we are reasonably prepared to meet it.*

JOHNSON—And you do not think that we are presently prepared to meet it?

MARSHALL—I am quite certain that we are not. (*Italics added.*)

These samples of administration thinking could be easily multiplied.* Their implication clearly is that present policy is mere temporizing while the armed strength of the nation is built up to a point where a different policy becomes possible. That different policy *could be* straight MacArthurism; but it seems more likely to be the policy implicit in Acheson's famous 7-points speech of March 1950—a policy of by-passing China and presenting an ultimatum directly to the Soviet Union. (The seven points were summarized in the March 1951 issue of MR, p. 481.)

Subjectively, of course, there are great differences between the course proposed by MacArthur and that actually being followed by the administration. MacArthur thinks like an old-fashioned imperialist and scarcely bothers to disguise the fact that his policies are those of aggression and conquest. The administration, on the other hand, thinks in more ideological terms: it has no designs on anybody, it only wants to defend the "free world." But in substance, the most important difference is merely a matter of timing. Both policies lead to the same result.

And what is that result? The glorious world empire of which MacArthur dreams? The "free world" run from Washington *via* the United Nations which is Mr. Acheson's "vision?" Or war and death, unimaginable misery and endless destruction?

For any one with the slightest sense of history, there can be no doubt about the answer. The Russians and the Chinese will not capitulate. If forced to, they will fight to the bitter end. No one can now say what the end would be, but it is certain that it would bring

* General Bradley's testimony, which began after this was written, is particularly instructive. "Frankly," he told the Senate Committees, "in the opinion of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, this [i.e. MacArthur's] strategy would involve us in the wrong war, at the wrong place, at the wrong time, and with the wrong enemy." This was part of a prepared statement and cannot be dismissed as poor formulation. It shows conclusively that in the administration's thinking there is a right war, at the right place, at the right time, and with the right enemy.

no glory and infinite horror to the people of the United States.

It follows that the great task of the moment, not only for the Left but for every one who loves his country and wants to save it from irreparable disaster, is not merely to oppose MacArthurism. That must be done, but at the same time the equally great dangers of administration policy must be resolutely exposed. And, perhaps most important of all, it must be convincingly demonstrated that these are *not* the only possible courses for the United States to pursue. There is a third course, the course of negotiation and compromise, the only course that holds out the prospect of restoring peace.

It is indicative of both MacArthur's and the administration's attitude that the question of a compromise settlement of the Korean war has, up to the time of writing, received no serious attention in the Senate hearings. Some of MacArthur's supporters have attempted to pin the "appeasement" label on their opponents by asserting or insinuating that the administration has been or is willing to consider a Korean settlement which would include the handing over of Formosa to Peking and the seating of Peking's representatives as the lawful Chinese delegation to the UN. The administration, speaking through Marshall, has repeatedly and heatedly denied that it ever contemplated agreeing to these terms for either a cease-fire or a peace settlement.

Now, stop a moment and consider the implications of these charges and denials. In the first place, both sides tacitly concede that the Korean war could be brought to an end if Peking's terms with regard to Formosa and the UN were met. And this means that both sides know that all their talk about red imperialism, Chinese determination to conquer Korea and destroy the UN forces, and so forth and so on—that all this talk is really entirely beside the point. *In their own opinion*, Peking is fighting for Formosa and a seat in the UN; if satisfaction is given on these two points, there should be no great difficulty about concluding a cease-fire which, in turn, would open the way to negotiations about the future of Korea.

The question which should be driven home to the American people is simply this: do you want to wage war, sacrifice thousands of American lives every month, and complete the destruction of the Korean nation in order to hold Formosa for Chiang Kai-shek and prevent the actual government of China from sending its delegates to the UN?

It's no good saying that the Korean war is a separate question. It was American, not Chinese, policy to make it an affair of the UN. It was Washington, not Peking, that linked intervention in Korea with intervention in Formosa.

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Nor is there any sense in saying that to meet Chinese terms with regard to Formosa and representation in the UN would be appeasement. China is asking for nothing that she hasn't a perfect right to ask for. Formosa is Chinese and has repeatedly been recognized as such by the United States government. Who controls it is a purely internal Chinese affair which concerns this country no more than the control of Hawaii concerns China. And the question of representation in the UN must be decided by the Chinese people, not by the American government. "Appeasement" acquired its present meaning when Britain and France gave Hitler what didn't belong to him (or them). The Chinese are only asking for what does belong to them, and to accede would be a simple act of justice—the exact opposite of appeasement.

MacArthur would expand the war—today. The administration would wait until next year or the year after. The highest interest of the American people is to stop the war. It can be done—now and on honorable terms.

That, in a nutshell, is the lesson of the MacArthur affair.

Can enough people learn it in time to stop the drift to disaster?

(May 16, 1951)

WHERE WE STAND

(From the editor's statement of policy in Vol. I, No. 1, published in May, 1949.)

We find completely unrealistic the view of those who call themselves socialists, yet imagine that socialism can be built on an international scale by fighting it where it already exists. This is the road to war, not to socialism. On the other hand, we do not accept the view that the USSR is above criticism simply because it is socialist. We believe in, and shall be guided by, the principle that the cause of socialism has everything to gain and nothing to lose from a full and frank discussion of shortcomings, as well as accomplishments, of socialist countries and socialist parties everywhere.

We shall follow the development of socialism all over the world, but we want to emphasize that our major concern is less with socialism abroad than with socialism at home. We are convinced that the sooner the United States is transformed from a capitalist to a socialist society, the better it will be, not only for Americans, but for all mankind.

IMPERIALISM AND PEACE

BY D. D. KOSAMBI

We do not have, today, the peace yearned for by millions all over the world. In Korea we see a full-scale modern war waged relentlessly against an entire nation whose one wish, for centuries, has been unity, with independence from foreign aggression. In Malaya and Indo-China two decaying imperialist powers struggle desperately to maintain the privileges of an outworn colonial system over the opposition of people who will no longer be denied freedom. Military operations in Greece, Indonesia, Kashmir, Palestine, have shown us for five years other facets of the same malignant activity.

Yet the supporters of peace have a power which can stop this violence and bloodshed. For all these wars and acts of aggression—even the war in Korea—have been waged in the name of establishing peace. At first, we were given various mutually contradictory reasons why the Koreans were to be saved from themselves. Then we were told that General MacArthur meant to supply the aggressive leadership which is all that Asiatics can appreciate. He seems to think that we Asiatics will naturally appreciate saturation bombing of peaceful villages, destruction of schools and hospitals, savage reprisals against civilians and prisoners of war. But this is an error. What we do appreciate is that his utterances show quite clearly who is the real aggressor in Korea. We Asiatics also belong to the human race; we also are made of flesh and blood; we tread the same earth, breathe the same air.

The peace we want means true democracy. The experience of millennia has shown us that no other kind of peace will last. No man shall claim to be another's master whether by divine right, the right of birth, the right of armed conquest, or the right vested in accumulated private property. Such rights can only be exercised by fraud and violence against the vast majority of the people, by destroying the very foundations of peace, namely, truth and justice. The lowest in the land must raise himself to full stature as an individual member of a great society. He must exercise in full, by actual participation in governing himself and others, his right to receive according to his needs, his duty to contribute according to his ability. Formal

D. D. Kosambi, a Marxist intellectual and professor of mathematics, is one of India's most brilliant and versatile scientists.

recourse to the ballot-box for a periodic but ineffective change of masters will not suffice.

The stale proclamations of all imperialisms, from Rome to the present day, have again been proved false in the British, French, and Dutch empires. The people of China rejected, in favor of democracy, the aggressive leadership of Chiang Kai-shek, who was so amply supplied with foreign arms and money. But the only lesson imperialism can draw from these rebuffs is that puppets are unreliable, that open intervention is a far better road to conquest—provided the other side is poorly armed. The Pax Romana and the Pax Britannica should now be replaced by a dollar peace, the Pax Americana. Tacitus gave a candid opinion of a contemporary Roman emperor: "He made a desert and called it peace." A modern historian might say of Hitler: "He waged total war, and called it peace." This kind of "peace" did not succeed in Europe, nor will it in any other part of the world.

Let us trace this crazy logic to its source. The issue of peace or war does not depend upon a single individual who is ostensibly at the helm of a nation, but upon the dominant class which really holds the power. We are all convinced of the late President Franklin D. Roosevelt's liberalism and sincere desire for world peace. Yet in attempting to "quarantine the aggressor" in Spain, he only helped destroy the democratic victims of fascist aggression. Hitler's advance into Czechoslovakia went unchecked, as did Mussolini's into Abyssinia, Japan's into China. We can trace this kind of aggression right back to World War I and its aftermath, to the grim intervention against the young Soviet Union which had sounded the call for peace at its very birth. There is indeed a broad continuity of policy, against peace and against democracy. This undercurrent has never changed its direction, no matter what appears on the surface. Leaders like Mr. Churchill merely carry out the interests of the dominant class and would get nowhere without its backing; they are merely a symptom, not the main cause.

Look at another aspect of this underlying policy. Ploughing cotton back into the soil, burning up or dumping millions of tons of food into the ocean were desperation measures introduced at the beginning of Roosevelt's New Deal. Instead of changing the ownership of the means of production, or designing a better distribution mechanism, these transitional measures rapidly became a permanent feature of the American way of life. The United States government began regularly to pay subsidies to produce food which was then destroyed to keep prices up. Up to 1950, American farmers were paid by their government to destroy mountainous heaps of potatoes and to feed to livestock wheat produced by the most modern farming

technique; at the same time, Canadian wheat was being imported into the United States because, even after paying the protective tariff, it was cheaper than the subsidized American product. This insane economic system shows exactly the same kind of twisted logic as that of modern imperialism which wages war in the name of peace and calls any move towards peace an act of warlike aggression, which bombs people indiscriminately to save them from Communism.

The crooked roots of imperialism lie deep in the need for profits and ever more profits—for the benefit of a few monopolists. The American "way of life" did not solve the world problem of the great depression of 1929-33. In the United States this was solved by World War II. But only for a time. Korea shows that the next step is to start a new war to stave off another depression. The one lesson of the last depression which stuck is that profits can be kept up by *creating* shortages where they do not and need not exist. War materials are produced for destruction. Producing them restricts consumer goods, which increases profits in double ratio. Any logic that proves the necessity of war is the correct logic for imperialism and for Big Business, which now go hand in hand. Mere contradictions don't matter for this sort of lunatic thinking where production of food is no longer the method of raising man above the animals, but merely a way of making profit while millions starve.

Let us now consider the deeper fact that food is itself a weapon—a negative weapon, but no less deadly than the atom-bomb or bacteriological warfare. A bomb or a bullet shortens a man's life. The lack of proper nourishment also shortens a man's expectation of life by a calculable number of years, even when there is no actual famine or death by starvation. Deprive a man of food and you make him prey not only to hunger but to disease; do it year after year, generation after generation, and you produce a race whose minds and bodies are stunted, tortured, warped, deformed. You produce monstrous superstitions, twisted social systems. Destroying stock-piles of food is the same kind of action as building up stock-piles of atom-bombs.

But the war waged by means of food is different in one very important respect from national and colonial aggression. It is war against the whole of humanity except that tiny portion to whom food is a negligibly small item of expenditure, war also against millions of *American* workers. In a word, it is *class war*, and all other wars of today stem from attempts to turn it outward. Even the Romans knew that the safest way to avoid inner conflict, to quiet the demands of their own citizens, was to attempt new conquests.

Quite apart from the destructiveness of total war, the crooked logic of Big Business and warmongers is fatal to the clear thinking

needed for science. The arguments that modern science originates with the bourgeoisie, that the enormous funds devoted to war research are a great stimulus to science, are vicious. The scientific outlook came into being when the bourgeoisie was a new, progressive class, struggling for power against feudal and clerical reaction. Science is cumulative, as is large-scale mechanized production which congeals the result of human labor and technical skill in increasingly large and more efficient machines. But for modern capitalists, a class in decay, the findings of science (apart from profit-making techniques) have become dangerous; and so it becomes necessary for them to coerce the scientist, to restrict his activity. That is one reason for vast expenditure on secret atomic research, for putting third-raters in control to bring big-business monopoly to the laboratory. The broad cooperation and pooling of knowledge which made scientific progress so rapid is destroyed. Finally the individual scientist is openly and brutally enslaved for political reasons. Science cannot flourish behind barbed wire, no matter how much money the war offices may pay to "loyal" mediocrities. Freedom is the recognition of necessity; science is the investigation, the analysis, the cognition of necessity. Science and freedom always march together. The war mentality which destroys freedom must necessarily destroy science.

The scientist by himself can neither start nor stop a war. Modern war has to be fought by millions in uniform and greater numbers in fields and factories. But a scientific analysis of the causes of war, if convincing to the people at large, could be an effective as well as a democratic force for peace. We have to make it clear to the common people of the world that any aggression anywhere is, in the last analysis, war against them. We have to tell them not to be misled by the familiar but insidious whisper: "Things were better when we had a war." This is just like a criminal drug peddler saying to his victim: "See how much better it was for you when you had the drug than when you sobered up afterwards. Buy another dose." The real problem is how to straighten out our thinking and to change our economy, to transfer control of all production to society as a whole. Only then can we have real democracy and lasting peace.

It must be understood quite clearly that the war between nations, World War III, is not inevitable and can be stopped by pressure of public opinion. The inner conflict, the class war, on the other hand, must be settled within each country without foreign armed intervention. The peace movement cannot deny to any people the right to revolution, nor even the right to wage civil war. It can only demand that no nation's armed forces should go into action upon foreign territory. That is aggression even when done under cover of "defense," restoration of law and order, or a forced vote in the United

Nations. The purpose of the United Nations was to settle all international differences without war, not to provide a joint flag for the ancient imperialist "police actions." If unchecked, such an adventure is a clear invitation to the aggressor to initiate the next world war, as can be seen by the history of appeasement during the 1930's.

But there is one important difference between that period and the present. There were then large powers such as the British Empire and the United States which could assume a position of formal neutrality while fascism was being built up as a military and political counterpoise to Communism. Even this formal neutrality is impossible today; only mass action by the common people of the world remains as the bulwark of peace.

A CENTURY OF PROGRESS

About a dozen gentlemen crowded to the spot while the poor fellow was stripping himself, and as soon as he stood on the floor, bare from top to toe, a most rigorous scrutiny of his person was instituted. The clear black skin, back and front, was viewed all over for sores from disease; and there was no part of his body left unexamined. The man was told to open and shut his hands, asked if he could pick cotton, and every tooth in his head was scrupulously looked at.

—*Chambers' Journal*, October, 1853

They [Mexican "wetbacks"] file through a small doorway of the Casa del Pueblo (community center) where an American growers' representative shakes hands with each one and sometimes pats a worker on the shoulder, in ostensible cordiality. Both gestures are calculated to ascertain their strength and fitness as farmhands.

Simultaneously, the agent sizes them up at a glance, summarily rejecting the men who appear too young or too old, too urban or too paunchy for "stoop" labor, alcoholics and other unpromising candidates.

—*New York Times*, April 24, 1951

THE CRISIS IN THE LABOR PARTY

BY KONNI ZILLIACUS

The resignation of two Cabinet Ministers, Aneurin Bevan and Harold Wilson, and of one junior Minister, Mr. John Freeman, has brought into the open the crisis long ripening in the Labor Party. The immediate occasion of the crisis was the refusal of the resigning Ministers to accept the break with the principle that the National Health Service should be free. The root cause of the crisis is the growing pressure of rearmament on the cost of living, the spread of the fear of war, and wide-spread feeling that the mountainous loads the British people are being asked to bear have been heaped on them by the United States. The ultimate impact on world affairs may be a breaking strain on the Anglo-American alliance.

The part of Bevan's speech that got the greatest cheer from the Labor benches was his strong criticism of American policy. He deplored the "campaign of intolerance, hatred, and witch-hunting" that accompanied the United States rearmament program, and said that Britain's present plight was due to her being "dragged at the heels of American diplomacy." He argued that the great and growing shortage of raw materials, which is crippling not only Britain's rearmament program but also her export trade, and threatening her with economic disaster, was due to the anarchy of American competitive capitalism

which is unable to restrain itself at all, as is seen in the stock-piling that is now going on and that denies to the economy of Great Britain even the means of carrying on our civil production. . . . It is now perfectly clear to anyone who examines the matter objectively that the lurchings of the American economy, the extravagant and unpredictable behavior of the production machine, and the failure on the part of the American government to inject the arms program into the economy slowly enough have already caused a vast inflation of prices all over the world, and have disturbed the economy of the western world to such an extent that if it goes on more damage will be done by this unrestrained behavior than by the behavior of the nation the arms are intended to restrain. . . .

Konni Zilliacus, MP from 1945 to 1950, was expelled from the Labor Party in 1949 for opposing Britain's cold-war foreign policy.

THE CRISIS IN THE LABOR PARTY

It is quite clear that for the rest of the year and for the beginning of next year . . . the cost of living is going to rise precipitously. As that cost of living rises the industrial workers of Great Britain will try to adjust themselves to the rising spiral of prices and because they will do so by a series of individual trade union demands a hundred and one battles will be fought on the industrial field. . . . It is even more serious than that. The administrator responsible for the American defense program has already announced to the world that America proposes to provide her share of the arms program, not out of economies in the American economy but out of increased production, and already plans are envisaged whereby before very long the American economy will be extended for arms production alone by a percentage equal to the total British consumption—civil and arms. When that happens the demands made upon the world's precious raw materials will be such that the civilian economy of the western world outside America will be undermined. We shall have mass unemployment. Already there is short time work in many important parts of industry and before the middle of the year, unless something serious can be done, we shall have unemployment in many of our important industrial centers.

Mr. Wilson told the House that Britain had embarked on her rearmament program as part of a collective enterprise by members of the Atlantic community, in the expectation of getting her rightful share of the materials available.

We have not had our rightful share. I hope we may still get it. But today British industry stands disorganized and threatened by partial paralysis. The American government and people have got to choose between their partner's defense program on the one hand and their own stockpiles and the level of their own unrestricted civilian consumption on the other. Until the right choice is made our defense program remains an illusion.

Messrs. Bevan and Wilson followed up these complaints with a deadly analysis of the shortages of raw materials, machine tools, and components; and of the consequent impossibility of carrying out the vast rearmament program. Mr. Morrison, the Foreign Secretary, Mr. Strauss, the Minister for Supply, and Mr. Strachey, the War Minister, have practically confirmed the accuracy of this diagnosis in subsequent public speeches. The appointment of Dick Stokes, the bluff, genial businessman who somehow strayed into the Labor Party, as Minister for procuring raw materials, is looked upon as further confirmation.

Like most big crises, this one started with something relatively trivial and deepens and spreads as it advances: to strain at charging

half the price for false teeth and spectacles provided under the Health Service seemed frivolous after swallowing the vast Arms Budget. Moreover, Mr. Bevan was ready to swallow his protests and stay in the Cabinet if the "appointed day" for the coming into force of the charges (which required an amendment to the Health Act) had been postponed until this fall. The argument then was that if in the meanwhile it really proved impossible to use in this Budget year the whole of the vast sums voted for arms, because of the shortage of raw materials and machine tools, the money saved could be used to drop the proposed charges for false teeth and spectacles and preserve the principle of a free Health Service.

Mr. Wilson hinted broadly in the House that Mr. Morrison (who was acting Prime Minister while Mr. Attlee nursed his stomach ulcers in hospital) took advantage of the situation to carry out his long cherished plan of calling Nye Bevan's bluff next time he threatened to resign. According to one version he was even aided in this project by Mr. Attlee himself who, in a tartly worded letter from his sick bed, practically told the Minister of Labor to knuckle under or get out.

Once Mr. Bevan found he had to go through with it or be put down as a bluffer and not a fighter, he came out with his fundamental objections to the principles of the Budget. He tried in vain to persuade Mr. Wilson to stay in, and both attempted to dissuade young Mr. Freeman from resigning. But Mr. Wilson had made up his mind, and Mr. Freeman felt so strongly about it that he resisted the enormous bribe of being offered the post of President of the Board of Trade with a seat in the Cabinet.

The weakness and strength of the Labor Party is that it is overwhelmingly a working-class party and reflects the fears, desires, and needs of the workers. Given the absence of national leadership to show the connection between wider issues and wages, prices, and social services, the rank-and-file and back bench M.P.'s have been blind all along to what would happen if the Government went on running a Tory foreign policy—until the consequences were a crack-down on food, health, and old age pensions. The latter are a particularly sore point, for the old age pensioners are numerous, well organized, vocal, and have right and justice on their side. Moreover the worker and small shopkeeper of today is the old age pensioner of tomorrow, and has therefore a direct interest in supporting their cause. The concessions made in the Budget to old age pensioners are regarded as wholly inadequate, and the forty miners' M.P.'s in the House have joined with other trade unionists to put their views on this subject very forcefully to Mr. Attlee, who is understood to have promised concessions. But if he makes concessions he will be up

against the Arms Budget. It is no longer possible to pursue a Tory foreign policy and an even mildly socialist home policy—the two have been irrevocably divorced by the Arms Budget.

No wonder the debate is spreading in widening rings and sinking deeper and deeper into the local trade union branches and Labor Parties. The enemies of Bevan and Wilson, of course, say that personal ambition was the main motive for their resignations. Mr. Wilson, they allege, was Sir Stafford Cripps' white-haired boy and the infant prodigy of the Cabinet. He did not like being beaten by Gaitskell, who is Dr. Dalton's white-haired boy. Chuter Ede, the Home Secretary, and one of the old stagers in the leadership, made a furious attack on Aneurin Bevan at the Parliamentary Party meeting, accusing him of trying to wreck the Party and push it into an election it was bound to lose, in order that he should become leader of the defeated Party. He even compared him to Oswald Mosley. His extravagant diatribe shocked the Parliamentary Party and threw its sympathies on the side of Aneurin Bevan, who had just made a hash of his own speech to the Party by losing control of himself and almost breaking into tears.

The man who won the hearts of the Party and against whom no personal charges have been made was John Freeman, who explained that he did not want to waste the time of the House with another speech—two explanations by resigning Ministers were enough, and after all he was only a junior Minister. He had not wanted to resign, because he was proud of being a Minister, was keen on his job, and felt that he had got his foot on the first rung of the ladder. But as he believed a principle was involved he could not stay. He ended with a heart-felt plea for unity in the Party and promised his own support against the Tories. At that time there were few who knew he had actually turned down the offer of Presidency of the Board of Trade—that information has since leaked out in the Parliamentary Party and put his reputation still higher.

Their friends and supporters, on the other hand, feel greatly encouraged that some of the leaders of the Labor Party have put principles before jobs and believe that the resignations may give the Labor Party its second wind. The *Liberal News Chronicle* put Bevan's "hard core support" in the House at only a dozen. Even so, that hard core support includes three members, besides Bevan himself, of the National Executive. But inside estimates by cautious and level-headed Labor back benchers put his support in the Parliamentary Party as high as a hundred.

The minority in the National Executive includes all the representatives of the Constituency Parties except those who are actually members of the Government. The Constituency Parties represent the

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politically active members of the Labor Party and those who do the work in elections. Bevan has in the last few years come in top of the poll in the elections at the Annual Conferences for Constituency members of the National Executive. He got 900,000 out of a possible 1,000,000 at the last election.

Although the Trades Union General Council voted, by thirteen to six, to support the Government on the Budget, the representatives on the General Council of two of the most powerful Unions (Figgins of the Railwaymen and Tanner of the Engineers), both supporters of Mr. Bevan, were absent from the meeting, as were two or three others who would certainly have been Bevanites. In fact only nineteen out of thirty-one members of the General Council took part in the voting.

The Scottish Trade Union Congress, representing 700,000 members, was overwhelmingly pro-Bevan and voted a series of resolutions going beyond him in demanding more trade with the Soviet Union, China, and Eastern Europe and an end to American interference with British policies.

All three resigning Ministers have been overwhelmingly supported by their local Parties. In the case of Aneurin Bevan it was unanimous, and there was a huge and enthusiastic demonstration at a public meeting.

Theoretically the National Executive could get tough with Aneurin Bevan and his supporters on the National Executive, Tom Driberg, Ian Mikardo, and Barbara Castle (all Members of Parliament) for opposing majority decisions of the N.E.C. But in fact, things have reached the stage in the Labor Party where the Executive simply do not dare to expel any more prominent members. For not only would they start a split in the Party, but they would swing against them the overwhelming desire not to split that is part of the loyalty of the Labor Party. Instead they are trying to turn this loyalty against Aneurin Bevan and his supporters. The latter, however, have countered by making it clear that they will always support the Government in the House against the Tories, and by issuing appeals to stand together for the election which, it is expected, will take place in October.

The Government's calculation is that the present price rise, which is regarded as the delayed effect of devaluation, will spend itself during the summer; food will be more plentiful, as it always is in summer; there will be no coal crisis even if the British summer does its worst; the Festival of Britain will put people in a good mood; with luck the war in the Far East might peter out and Mr. Morrison might even be able to pull off some kind of success at a Four Power Conference. All this would enable the Government to hold an election in the fall and just scrape through. If they delayed any

longer, the rearmament price rise would begin in earnest and would soar to heights that would make the present cost of living look like Easy Street.

These arguments are still all the Government can cling to, although hopes of any foreign policy success in either the Far East or Europe are fading, and if half of what Bevan, Wilson, and Freeman say about economic developments in the next few months comes true the home situation will be even worse in the fall than it is now. But other Ministers—Strauss and Strachey are mentioned—are believed to have refrained from resigning only so as not to bring the Government down now. R. H. Crossman M.P., uncharitably said to be sitting on the fence until he sees which side will win, has christened the present Government "a caretaker Government" meant to last only a few months. In the circumstances, whatever may be the secret longing of the right-wing leaders to carry on indefinitely with a "non-controversial" program, that is, with a coalition policy from the Labor benches, even they realize it would be political suicide to hang on much beyond October.

Meanwhile Mr. Bevan, who for so long was the Left in the Cabinet, now finds himself well to the right of the Left in the Labor Party hailing him as their leader. They want a special Party Conference in July, or at the latest August, to unite and commit the party to a definitely socialist election program. Above all, they are quite clear that Mr. Bevan and his friends cannot sustain their economic and social objections to the Budget unless they follow up with a refutation of the main argument of the Government, namely, that we must sacrifice our standard of living for the sake of defence.

Mr. Bevan and Mr. Wilson touched the fringe of this subject by blaming the tie-up with the United States for our difficulties, and arguing that Britain should take a line of her own in world affairs. Mr. Bevan is known to be a strong supporter of the independence of Yugoslavia and to believe that Labor Britain should make it clear that we are prepared to treat as friends Communist regimes and parties who accept peaceful settlement of differences and non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries as their international code of conduct, and include respect for human rights and freedom in the socialist society they are trying to build. He argues that the British government should help the Yugoslavs to make a success of their socialism, for the effect of that example on the Soviet Union and the Cominform states would do far more than armaments to open the door to a tolerable relation between the Communist and non-Communist worlds. He wants to use Yugoslavia as a test case in applying this policy.

But the Left in the Labor Party go much further: they say the

root evil is the policy of the military containment of Communism, which Churchill bequeathed to Bevin and sold to the Americans. This policy is fundamentally counter-revolutionary, interventionist, imperialist, and aggressive, although masquerading as self-defence. It should be repudiated by the Labor Party. Instead the Party should proclaim that its aim is a live-and-let-live agreement between the Communist and non-Communist worlds. It should put forward British proposals for a settlement of specific issues in Asia and Europe; for trade relations between East and West; for control of atomic energy, abolition of weapons of mass destruction, reduction and limitation of armaments by international agreement with adequate provision for inspection and exchange of information; for voting procedure on the Security Council; and for a compromise on the attitude of the two sides to Communism. It should back these proposals by laying down and acting on the principle that since foreign policy determines what we have to defend, we should be committed by the United States on defence only in so far as the United States agrees with us on foreign policy.

They argue that official America is in a mood of hatred and panic about Communism more appropriate to fascism than to democracy and that war preparations, witch-hunting, and war hysteria have become part of its social self-preservation. Gallup polls show that the American people want peace. But MacArthur and his Republican supporters have shown that a powerful minority want a "preventive world war," on the old common law principle that a man must be assumed to intend the natural consequence of his acts. President Truman and Dean Acheson try to please both by keeping a small war going indefinitely in Korea and making peace with China impossible. At the same time, they have done more than their share to sabotage the Four Power Conference, because they did not want a settlement of Germany, but instead the continued occupation and rearmament of West Germany as part of American war preparations, the ultimate object of which is to overthrow the Communist regimes governing nearly half of mankind and to wipe out Communist Parties and their political allies in every country of the world—a crazy, megalomaniac, and suicidal program.

Britain was first pushed into a £3,600,000,000 rearmament program on the promise of American help and under threat of withholding Marshall Plan Aid. Then the U.S. raised the ante to £4,700,000,000, ended Marshall Plan Aid, refused to give any other assistance, and proceeded to make rearmament impossible by hogging raw materials as well as by dragging us into war in the Far East—making a monkey of the United Nations in the process, and sabotaging peace in Europe.

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These may not be fair views. But they are certainly what a lot of people think over here, mostly, but by no means only, in the Labor Party. Britain is getting good and sick of American world leadership which seems to be getting us nowhere except into economic crisis and nearer and nearer world war. That is why the Left in the Labor Party believe it is not only ultimately essential to national survival, but immediately desirable as the road to victory, to commit Aneurin Bevan to a socialist alternative to the coalition foreign policy—based on a British Declaration of Independence of the United States.

Things are not likely to come to a head in this respect this side of a General Election, unless, which is unlikely, the Left succeed in their project of summoning an emergency Party Conference. If, contrary to all expectation, the party, under its present leadership, and with its present policy, wins the next election even by a tiny majority, the victory of the Left will be delayed. But with electoral defeat will come a gloves-off fight, each side holding the other responsible and competing for the support of the rank and file. As the standard of living goes down, the militancy of the workers will go up and the restraining influence of loyalty to the Labor Government will disappear under Tory rule. In the circumstances, it would prove impossible for the right wing to keep their hold on the party and the future would belong to Aneurin Bevan and his friends—if they are capable of giving the lead in both home and foreign affairs that the Left demands.

EQUAL JUSTICE UNDER LAW

Below the pediment of the Supreme Court building in Washington, D. C., this motto is inscribed: "Equal Justice Under Law."

On May 8, 1951 Willie McGee, a Negro, was put to death in the electric chair at Laurel, Mississippi.

The alleged crime was rape, an offense for which no white man in that state has ever suffered the extreme penalty.

THE AMERICAN RULING CLASS

BY PAUL M. SWEETZ

PART II

Every community study shows clearly the existence of an upper social crust which is based on wealth. The nucleus is always the "old families" which have transmitted and usually augmented their fortunes from one generation to the next. Around this nucleus are grouped the *nouveaux riches*, the solidly established lawyers and doctors, the more successful of the social climbers and sycophants, and people whose family connections are better than their bank accounts. Taken all together, these are the people who comprise what is called "society." Except in very large cities, the whole community is aware of their existence and knows that they constitute a more or less well-defined "upper class."

So much is obvious. Certain other things, however, are not so obvious. It is not obvious, for example, that these local "upper classes" are in fact merely sections of a national upper class, nor that this national upper class is in fact the national ruling class. What we shall have to concentrate on therefore are two points: first, the structure of the national ruling class; and second, how the ruling class rules.

The Structure of the National Ruling Class

That the local upper crusts are merely sections of a national class (also of an international class, but that is beyond the scope of the present article) follows from the way they freely mix and intermarry. The facts in this regard are well known to any reasonably attentive observer of American life, and no attempt at documentation is called for here. I merely suggest that those sociologists who believe that only field work can yield reliable data, could provide valuable light on the mixing of the local upper crusts by a careful field study of a typical summer or winter resort.

The national ruling class, however, is not merely a collection of interrelated local upper crusts, all on a par with each other. It is rather a hierarchy of upper crusts which has a fairly definite organizational structure, including lines of authority from leaders to followers. It is here that serious study of the ruling class is most obviously lacking, and also most urgently needed. I shall confine

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myself to a few hints and suggestions, some of which may turn out on closer investigation to be mistaken or at any rate out of proportion.

Generally speaking, the sections of the national ruling class are hierarchically organized with hundreds of towns at the bottom of the pyramid and a handful of very large cities at the top. Very small communities can be counted out: normally the wealth and standing of their leading citizens is no more than enough to gain them entry into the middle class when they go to the city. Even towns as large as five or ten thousand may have only a few representatives in good standing in the national ruling class. You can always tell such a representative. Typically, he is a man "of independent means"; he went to a good college; he has connections and spends considerable time in the state capital and/or the nearest big city; he takes his family for part of the year to a resort where it can enjoy the company of its social equals. And, most important of all, he is a person of unquestioned prestige and authority in his own community: he is, so to speak, a local lieutenant of the ruling class.

Cities, of course, have more—I should also judge proportionately more—national ruling-class members. And as a rule those who live in smaller cities look up to and seek guidance from and actually follow those who live in large cities. Certain of these larger cities have in turn acquired the position of what we might call regional capitals (San Francisco, Chicago, Cleveland, Boston, and so on): the lines of authority in the given region run to and end in the capital. The relation which exists among these regional capitals is a very important subject which deserves careful study. There was a time in our national history when it would probably have been true to say that the sections of the ruling class in the regional capitals looked up to and sought guidance from and actually followed the New York section, and to a considerable extent this may still be the case. At any rate this is the kernel of truth in the Wall Street theory. My own guess, for what it is worth, is that economic and political changes in the last thirty years (especially changes in the structure and functions of the banking system and the expansion of the economic role of the state) have reduced the relative importance of New York to a marked degree, and that today it is more accurate to describe New York as *primus inter pares* rather than as the undisputed leader of all the rest.

The ruling-class hierarchy is not based solely on personal or family relations among the members of the ruling class. On the contrary, it is bulwarked and buttressed by a massive network of institutional relations. Of paramount importance in this connection are the corporate giants with divisions, branches, and subsidiaries reaching out to all corners of the country. The American Telephone

and Telegraph Company, with headquarters in New York and regional subsidiaries covering all 48 states, is in itself a powerful force welding the unity of the American ruling class; and it is merely the best-developed example of its kind. Formerly, a very large proportion of these business empires were centered in New York, and it was this more than anything else that gave that city a unique position. Today that proportion is much reduced, and cities like Pittsburgh, Cleveland, Detroit, Chicago, and San Francisco play a relatively more prominent part than they used to. In addition to corporations, an integrating role in the ruling class is performed by businessmen's organizations like the National Association of Manufacturers, the Chambers of Commerce, the Rotary and other so-called service clubs; by colleges and their alumni associations; by churches and women's clubs; by scores of fashionable winter and summer resorts (not all located in this country); and by a myriad other institutions too numerous even to attempt to list. (It will be noted that I have not mentioned the two great political parties in this connection. The reason is not that they don't to some extent play the part of an integrator of the ruling class: they do, and in a variety of ways. But their main function is quite different, namely, to provide the channels through which the ruling class manipulates and controls the lower classes. Compared to this function, their role *within* the ruling class is of quite secondary significance.)

Finally, we should note the key part played by the press in unifying and organizing the ruling class. To be sure, not all organs of the press figure here: the great majority, like the political parties, are instruments for controlling the lower classes. But the solidier kind of newspaper (of which the *New York Times* is, of course, the prototype), the so-called quality magazines, the business and technical journals, the high-priced newsletters and dopesheets—all of these are designed primarily for the ruling class and are tremendously important in guiding and shaping its thinking. This does not mean that they in some way make up or determine the *content* of ruling-class ideas—this content is basically determined by what I may call the class situation (about which more will be said presently)—but it does mean that they standardize and propagate the ideas in such a way that the entire ruling class lives on a nearly uniform intellectual diet.

All of the formal and informal, the personal and institutional, ties that bind the ruling class together have a twofold character: on the one hand they are transmission belts and channels of communication; and on the other hand they are themselves molders of ideas and values and behavior norms—let us say for short, of ruling-class ideology. And here we have to note another mechanism of the

greatest importance, the mechanism by which the class passes its ideology on from one generation to the next. The key parts of this mechanism are the family and the educational system. Ruling-class families are jealous protectors and indoctrinators of ruling-class ideology; the public school system faithfully reflects it and even, contrary to popular beliefs, fosters class distinctions; and private preparatory schools and colleges finish the job of dividing the ruling-class young from their compatriots. (In this connection, we must not be confused by the fact that a considerable number of lower-class families succeed in getting their sons and daughters into the private preparatory schools and colleges. This is merely a method by which the ruling class recruits the ablest elements of the lower classes into its service and often into its ranks. It is probably the most important such method in the United States today, having replaced the older method by which the abler lower-class young people worked their way directly up in the business world.)

How the Ruling Class Rules

Let us now turn, very briefly, to the question of how or in what sense the ruling class can be said to rule. This is a question which can easily lead to much mystification, but I think it can also be dealt with in a perfectly simple, straightforward way.

The question has two aspects, economic and political. The ruling class rules the economy in the sense that its members either directly occupy the positions in the economy where the key decisions are made or, if they don't occupy these positions themselves, they hire and fire those who do. The ruling class rules the government (using the term as a shorthand expression for all levels of government) in the sense that its members either directly occupy the key positions (largely true in the higher judiciary and the more honorific legislative jobs, increasingly true in the higher administrative jobs), or they finance and thus indirectly control the political parties which are responsible for staffing and managing the routine business of government. In short, the ruling class rules through its members who (1) do the job themselves, (2) hire and fire those who do, or (3) pay for the upkeep of political machines to do the job for them. That this rule through the members of the class is in fact *class rule* does not require to be separately demonstrated: it follows from the nature and structure of the class as we have already analyzed them.

This analysis of the way the ruling class rules is, of course, sketchy and oversimplified. I think nevertheless that it will stand up provided we can meet one objection, namely, that if the ruling class really ruled it would not put up with New Deals and

Fair Deals and trade unions and John L. Lewises and Sidney Hillmans and all sorts of other outrages—you may not think them outrages, but the important thing from our present point of view is that the upper class *does* think them outrages. I have found in lectures and conversations about the ruling class that this is by far the most important and frequent objection to this analysis.

A full answer, I think, would require a careful examination of the nature and limits of political power, something which obviously cannot be undertaken here. But the main point is clearly indicated in the following passage from Lincoln Steffens's *Autobiography*. The passage concludes a chapter entitled "Wall Street Again":

It is a very common error to think of sovereignty as absolute. Rasputin, a sovereign in Russia, made that mistake; many kings have made it and so lost their power to premiers and ministers who represented the "vested interests" of powerful classes, groups, and individuals. A dictator is never absolute. Nothing is absolute. A political boss concentrates in himself and personifies a very "wise" adjustment of the grafts upon which his throne is established. He must know these, reckon their power, and bring them all to the support of his power, which is, therefore, representative and limited. Mussolini, in our day, had to "deal with" the Church of Rome. A business boss has to yield to the powerful men who support him. The Southern Pacific Railroad had to "let the city grafters get theirs." The big bankers had to let the life insurance officers and employees get theirs. J. P. Morgan should have known what he soon found out, that he could not lick Diamond Jim Brady. Under a dictatorship nobody is free, not even the dictator; sovereign power is as representative as a democracy. It's all a matter of what is represented by His Majesty on the throne. In short, what I got out of my second period in Wall Street was this perception that everything I looked into in organized society was really a dictatorship, in this sense, that it was an organization of the privileged for the control of privileges, of the sources of privilege and of the thoughts and acts of the unprivileged; and that neither the privileged nor the unprivileged, neither the bosses nor the bossed, understood this or meant it.

There is, I think, more sound political science packed into that one paragraph than you will find in the whole of an average textbook. And it clearly contains the fundamental answer to the contention that the upper class doesn't rule because it has to put up with many things it doesn't like. Obviously the ruling class has to make concessions and compromises to keep the people, and especially the working class, in a condition of sufficient ignorance and contentment to accept the system as a whole. In other words, the ruling class operates within a definite framework, more or less restricted accord-

THE AMERICAN RULING CLASS

ing to circumstances, which it can ignore only at the peril of losing its power altogether—and, along with its power, its wealth and privileges.

We must next consider the problem of "class position," which determines the basic content of ruling-class ideology. Here I can do no more than indicate what is meant by the expression. This, however, is not so serious a deficiency as at first sight it might appear to be; for once the nature of class position is understood it will be seen to be the very stuff of contemporary history, the constant preoccupation of any one who attempts to interpret the world from a socialist standpoint.

Class position has two aspects: the relation of the class to its own national social system, and the relation of the national social system to the world at large. For purposes of analyzing the position of the American ruling class we can identify it with the body of American capitalists: in respect to basic ideology, the fringes of the ruling class have no independence whatever. The problem therefore can be reduced to the state of American capitalism on the one hand, and the place of American capitalism in the world on the other. As I have tried to show in more detail in an earlier article ("The American Economy and the Threat of War," MR, Nov. 1950), American capitalism has now reached the stage in which it is dominated by a strong tendency to chronic depression; while world capitalism, of which America is by far the most important component, is faced by a young, vigorous, and rapidly expanding international socialist system. These are the conditions and trends which determine the basic content of ruling-class ideology.

One final problem remains, that of divisions and conflicts within the ruling class. We are now in a position to see this problem in its proper setting and proportions. Aside from more or less accidental rivalries and feuds, the divisions within the ruling class are of several kinds: regional (based on economic differences and buttressed by historical traditions, and memories—the North-South division is the clearest example of this kind); industrial (for example, coal capitalists vs. oil capitalists); corporate (for example, General Motors vs. Ford); dynastic (for example, Du Ponts vs. Mellons); political (Republicans vs. Democrats); and ideological (reactionaries vs. liberals). These divisions cut across and mutually condition one another, and the dividing lines are irregular and shifting. These factors introduce elements of indeterminacy and instability into the behavior of the ruling class and make of capitalist politics something more than a mere puppet show staged for the benefit (and obfuscation) of the man in the street. But we must not exaggerate the depth of the divisions inside the ruling class: capitalists can and do fight among

themselves to further individual or group interests, and they differ over the best way of coping with the problems which arise from the class position; but overshadowing all these divisions is their common interest in preserving and strengthening a system which guarantees their wealth and privileges. In the event of a real threat to the system, there are no longer class differences—only class traitors, and they are few and far between.

In conclusion, let me say that I have tried to cover a great deal of ground in this essay on the American ruling class. I recognize that this procedure necessarily results in many gaps and omissions, but I hope that it also has compensating advantages. In particular, I hope that a bare outline of the whole subject may serve most effectively to bring into sharp relief the essential problems. I hope also that it will convince the reader not only that MR is justified in talking about the ruling class but that it would be impossible to discuss intelligently the current situation in this country and in the world at large without doing so.

Finally, if this essay has achieved its purpose it will have demonstrated the urgent need for a great deal more theoretical and factual study of the American ruling class. We would like to hear from MR readers about this. Perhaps it would be possible for individuals or groups to undertake specific study projects dealing with some aspect or aspects of the American ruling class. There is no subject which it is more important for the American Left to understand.

A group of men whose social role consists in taking profits from other people's labor can have no profound belief in equality and fraternity as desirable ideals. Their whole position is founded upon an inequality of economic status, which is the most important inequality of all. The actions they are obliged to take as profitmakers force them into competition with one another as well as with the men upon whose labor the profits are made. Thus for profitmakers cooperation has only an incidental, not a basic, use; and accordingly for them fraternity can scarcely be an ideal.

—Barrows Dunham, *Man Against Myth*

(continued from inside front cover)

use more, or can't find the ones you already received, let us know and we'll be glad to supply more.

It is interesting, incidentally, that one of our readers with experience in the magazine field was so impressed with this special leaflet as a promotion device that he strongly urged us to patent it. Said we'd make enough money to put MR on easy street. A nice idea, but our lawyer tells us it wouldn't be possible.

A Michigan subscriber writes:

I don't think I ever read anything that moved me more deeply than your editorial "Socialism is the Only Answer" in the May issue. Without sensational appeal but with a quiet eloquence, it moved me almost to tears. Could you not reprint it in pamphlet form?

A number of others have made the same suggestion, so what we have done is add this editorial and its title to a pamphlet we were already in the process of making up. The rest of the contents consists of one piece by each of the editors: "The Responsibility of the Socialist," by Leo Huberman; and "An Economic Program for America," by Paul Sweezy. *These have never been published in MR.* We believe that every reader will want to have this pamphlet and will be able to make good use of it in educational work. Details on the back cover: let us have your orders right away.

We have left only a few hundred copies of Leo Huberman's *The Truth About Socialism*, and after they are gone the book will be out of print. So if you're planning to get it, you'd better not delay any longer. One extra dollar with a new sub—or with a renewal—will bring you this three-dollar book, about which one of our subscribers recently wrote:

I have a complaint to register. I took it to bed with me fairly late one night thinking it would quickly put me to sleep. Instead, I sat up half the night reading it. A treatise on economics is not supposed to do that. It's unfair!

The birthday party which MR Associates threw for the magazine's second anniversary in New York on May 17th was a great success—as, indeed, were the earlier Associates' meetings at which Joshua Kunitz and Jon Naar spoke. We take this opportunity to thank the Associates and especially the little band of devoted socialists who did the hard work involved. We owe it to them, and to people like them all over the country, that MR has been able to live and grow for two years now. With their continued support, it will go on growing for many more.

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